



It's the 350th anniversary of Charles I's execution on 30 January, the subject of Radio 4's drama-documentary, *Justice or Murder*, on Saturday. Read news reports from the 17th-century *Journal The Intelligencer*, at [www.royal-stuarts.org/index.html](http://members.aanet/~davidco/history/charles1-whichhasbeen transferred to the net in its original newspaper form and includes Charles's pre-execution speech. You can also see reports on the Armada and the Great Fire of London, though you'll need a pretty powerful PC to read them.</p>
<p>A good site for those interested in the king's roots is <a href=) - the Royal Stuarts site. It is decked out in bright tartan tones and offers mini-biographies of the Stuart clan (including Charles).

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girl. Our own resident teenage girl has just gone, grumbling mightily, to school and anyway she's never really succumbed to the charms of boy bands - unless you count Ash as a boy band and I don't think you do. Jason's father has just been released from prison and Jason himself is not unknown to the police. Scott is really named Giles Hornchurch but the wily Nigel has reinvented him as Scott Le Tissier. Nicky is 15, with an appetite for younger girls - and older ones. In fact, he has impregnated his headmistress. Katie May of RFO Records has signed Boyz Unlimited to the label principally because she only has two boy bands on her books, as does her colleague in an adjoining office, and she wants to get a boy band ahead. Sounds fair enough to me.

Nigel the manager seems pretty sharp for a stealer of rare birds' eggs. In addition to turning Giles into Scott, he threatens the parents of the boyz that unless they promptly sign bind- ing and highly advantageous contracts on their sons' behalf, their names will be replaced. Nigel also rejects Gareth's simple-minded songs in favour of a cover version of *Sally's Prayer*. All of this seems entirely believable to me and this opener to *Boyz Unlimited* is given additional credibility by having Radio 1's Queen of Top Tunes, Shirley, doing the narration.

I have to be honest with you, I've never even met anyone from the boy band, let alone seen one in action, but Jason, Nicky, and Giles/Scott don't seem much like parody figures to me. It is easy to imagine them grinning for you from the pages of *Snog or Twelve* (if the magazines don't exist, they should), and shot slightly out of focus, and I can see them being interviewed in a version by Zoe Ball. Or Caprice. Tom and I have enjoyed Caprice on *The Big Breakfast*.

This first *Boyz Unlimited* is really little more than an introduction to the band, but in future programmes they'll be making their way to Abbey Road to record - Abbey Road, that is - and be seen snug-gling up to the top of the comparative success, despite the unimaginative spelling of their name, of the boyz ultimately seeking so much in the work of Elton John. I don't remember whether it was Elton or Deuteronomy, "For is it not written that great thoughts are surely come, and with voices and words who shall triumph over you." Remember that, boyz heads. RT

JOHN PEELE'S FAMILY ALBUM



"BOYZ UNLIMITED DON'T SEEM MUCH LIKE PARODY FIGURES. IT'S EASY TO IMAGINE THEM ON THE PAGES OF SNOG OR TWELVE MAGAZINE"

ow it howls: the wind, the winter wind. Over hill, over dale, through curtain, through blind, The winter wind, howling, howling." Lines are taken from my coming book of light verse, *Kiss of the Thorn*. You argue that "wind" doesn't rhyme with "blind" and of 100 per cent happy with a poem, but hey... note myself here because ind, which sweeps across fields and through our h windows having trav- without let or hindrance wherever the nearest bit of a is located, threatens to turn the bath in the garden. u may be puzzled by that in the garden" bit. We are, 30 years, having our up- bathroom refurbished ur old pink bath is on its o the tip in Stowmarket. I miss it, as I shall miss the und grey snowflake-effect cross which I have shut- often in the middle of the Actually, apart from its

less pinkness, there is not much wrong with the Perhaps I should ship it instead to one of the who write to me asking for items to peddle at are styled Celebrity Auctions. I've never known o send on these occasions, usually writing a dis- ve letter denying any celebrity status and en- g a £5 note, pointing out that an autographed graph of me went at auction some years ago for nd that by sticking a stamp on their request, they ost money. I know the postal authorities dis- ge the sending of cash in this way, but I'm a wild ne. Rather disgustingly, I did, once or twice, har- onytails that I was growing and send those. I admit to owning one? of this has anything whatever to do with this s preview video, which is Channel 4's **Boyz Unlimited** (*Fridays*), produced by the wildly suc- That Trick mob. Keeping it as brief as I can, Boyz are Jason, Nicky, Gareth and Scott. They introduced to the world, but in future programmes they'll be making their way to Abbey Road to record - Abbey Road, that is - and be seen snug-gling up to the top of the comparative success, despite the unimaginative spelling of their name, of the boyz ultimately seeking so much in the work of Elton John. I don't remember whether it was Elton or Deuteronomy, "For is it not written that great thoughts are surely come, and with voices and words who shall triumph over you." Remember that, boyz heads. RT